

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 SCCT-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 NIC-01

SY-10 OPR-02 AID-20 PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-07 PA-04

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /150 W

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R 141956Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5641

INFO USCINCSO

DIA DOD WASHDC

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USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, AR

SUBJECT: VIOLENCE IN ARGENTINA

1. THE BOMBINGS AND SHOTS FIRED IN CORDOBA WERE NOT THE ONLY VIOLENCE RECORDED DURING THE LAST WEEK IN ARGENTINA. A DESCRIPTION OF THE MORE SIGNIFICANT ACTS FOLLOWS.

2. A METAL WORKERS UNION OFFICE WAS BOMBED IN BUENOS AIRES. THIS CAME ON THE HEELS OF RECENT ELECTIONS IN THIS UNION IN WHICH THE ORTHODOX SLATE WAS THE ONLY ONE PRESENTED (THE LEFTISTS HAVING BEEN EXCLUDED, OR BEING TOO WEAK TO PRESENT A SLATE--DEPENDING ON WHICH SIDE TELLS THE STORY). THE ARGENTINE LIBERATION FORCES (FAL) CLAIMED CREDIT FOR THE ACT AND USED THE SAME RIFLE GRENADE TECHNIQUE USED IN EARLIER ATTACKS ON THE US EMBASSY RESIDENCE AND SHERATON HOTEL. THIS GROUP ALSO KIDNAPPED A BUENOS AIRES DOCTOR ON MARCH 12.

3. THE OFFICES OF THE LEFTIST PERONIST NEWSPAPER NOTICIAS
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WERE BOMBED ON MARCH 9.

4. MIGUEL CASTROFINI, A RIGHTWING PERONIST, WAS ASSASSINATED ON MARCH 8 IN BUENOS AIRES.

5. IN ROSARIO, OSCAR CIARLOTTI WAS CAPTURED BY POLICE. HE IS ONE OF THE ERP MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE APRIL 1973 KIDNAPPING OF ADMIRAL FRANCISO ALEMAN, WHO WAS CIARLOTTI'S UNCLE.

6. LOCAL PRESS REPORTED MARCH 14 THAT A \$14.2 MILLION RANSOM HAD BEEN PAID FOR VICTOR SAMUELSON, THE AMERICAN EXECUTIVE WHO HAS BEEN HELD BY THE ERP FOR OVER THREE MONTHS.

7. COMMENT. AS USUALLY IS THE CASE, THE VIOLENCE FOLLOWS NO PARTICULAR PATTERN BUT INSTEAD REFLECTS THE CONTINUING STRUGGLE BETWEEN RIVAL FACTIONS OF PERONISM AND BATTLES BETWEEN POLICE, CRIMINALS AND TERRORISTS WITH ACTIONS ON THE PART OF ERP (AND OCASIONALLY FAL) ADDED IN. WHILE THE LEVEL OF KIDNAPPING SEEMS TO HAVE DROPPED IN THE POST-AZUL PERIOD (AT LEAST THOSE PUBLICLY REPORTED) OTHER ACTS SUCH AS THE ABOVE EXAMPLES HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT IN NUMBER TO KEEP THE OVERALL LEVEL OF VIOLENCE HIGH. WORSE, THERE IS NO CLEAR PROSPECT OF ANY EARLY DIMINUTION OF THIS VIOLENCE, SINCE NEITHER THE RIGHT OR THE LEFT APPEAR ABLE TO ESTABLISH THEIR PREDOMINANCE. ALL OF WHICH ATTACHES ADDED IMPORTANCE TO THE ROLE OF PERON, WITHOUT WHOSE PRESENCE THE VIOLENCE MIGHT WELL ASSUME MUCH GREATER PROPORTIONS, SINCE NEITHER THE RIGHT NOR THE LEFT (EXCEPT FOR THE EXTREMISTS) YET DARES TO DEFEY HIM OPENLY.

8. THE EXTREME LEFTIST NEWSPAPER EL MUNDO WAS CLOSED BY FEDERAL POLICE ON MARCH 14. THIS PAPER TENDS TO BE VERY CRITICAL OF THE GOA AND IS RUMORED TO BE FINANCED BY THE ERP. DESPITE SEVERAL PREVIOUS CLOSINGS, AFTER WHICH THE PAPER REAPPEARED IN A MATTER OF DAYS, THE CURRENT SPECULATION IS THAT THIS TIME IT WILL BE FOR A LONG TIME.
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